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**All doors to Medi-Cal set to open for real time**

**Accelerated Enrollment (AE) into MAGI Medi-Cal on November 1!**

**State should also grant AE to applicants still stuck in the COVID-era backlog.**

**What is AE?** It provides temporary Full Scope coverage in real time when a person's application information shows they are eligible for MAGI Medi-Cal. AE lasts until the county completes the final eligibility decision, even if that takes more than the 45-day limit. AE also frees up county time to process the small minority of applications that are not based on MAGI.

AE is provided under Medi-Cal eligibility aid code 8E. All immigrants, regardless of status, and pregnant adults who are waiting for a final eligibility decision also go into 8E for Full Scope under AE when their application information shows they are eligible for any MAGI category.

Medi-Cal starts in fee-for-service under AE, but managed care packets are sent before the final eligibility decision is made; issuing the packet starts the clock on the deadline for plan selection.

MCHA's training materials on the first phase of the AE implementation, which began in mid-2021, are available on request.

**What starts on November 1?** Two big things.

AE glitches fixed: Under the settlement in *Rivera v. Kent*, the state began to phase in AE starting July 1, 2021 for all MAGI individuals applying for Medi-Cal through Covered California at its online portal, [www.coveredca.com](http://www.coveredca.com), or by phone, mail, or fax. See, [ACWDL 21-32](#).

During this phase, MCHA documented errors in how AE was programmed into the automated eligibility rules engine (called "CalHEERS"). These errors prevent eligible applicants from being approved for AE while identity is being verified or when an inaccurate report of death or incarceration status emerges from a database. The glitch regarding ID verification in particular has prevented many eligible immigrants from receiving AE. **All three of these glitches are scheduled to be fixed by November 1.**

AE expands to applications submitted directly to the county: Starting November 1, MAGI-eligible individuals applying for Medi-Cal directly to the county using BenefitsCal or by mail, phone, fax or in person will also be granted AE. [MEDIL I 23-45](#); [ACWDL 22-24](#).

**This expansion to the SAWS system will not only benefit hundreds of thousands of MAGI applicants each year but also beneficiaries discontinued from Medi-Cal** after the end in March 2023 of the public health emergency's "continuous eligibility" protection. Less than halfway through the unwinding process, 500,000 beneficiaries, mostly children, have already been discontinued for "procedural reasons", not for ineligibility. They need AE as a rapid re-enrollment strategy when other options for returning to Medi-Cal don't work for them.

**Note:** For people applying directly to the county, AE may be delayed until an eligibility worker starts to process the application with SAWS, even for applicants applying online via BenefitsCal. Because the state has been fuzzy on the timeline for doing this, there is concern about the real time aspect of AE when applying at the county. Once AE is granted, however, it does go back to the first day of the application month.

**To get confirmation of real time AE enrollment without delay**, consider applying for Medi-Cal through Covered CA online at [www.coveredca.com](http://www.coveredca.com). MAGI applications submitted that way are fully automated to grant AE in real time in CalHEERS.

**Join our AE Strike Team!** The best, and often the only, way to find out if AE is working is to hear from advocates in the field about what they are seeing with their clients' cases. **Please let us know if you have questions or encounter difficulties with any aspect of AE.**

**The state should also use AE to quickly grant Medi-Cal to applicants still stuck in the COVID-era backlog.**

During the COVID public health emergency, states were given flexibility on the federal 45-day and 90-day deadlines for processing MAGI and disability-based applications, respectively. That flexibility ended March 1, 2023, but by then over 200,000 people were stuck in a backlog. Though most by far were MAGI applicants, many did not receive AE due to the glitches that won't be fixed until November 1.

The state claims that the number of backlogged applicants from the COVID-era is coming down quickly, but local county data indicate otherwise. **Whatever the number of persons affected or the distribution of MAGI vs. non-MAGI, advocates call on DHCS to immediately move all of these individuals into AE until the decision on their Medi-Cal applications is complete.**

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